Opening of Nathu-la for border trade

882. SHRI HARISH RAWAT:
SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA;
SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) by when Nathu-la route is likely to be opened for border trade between India and China; and

(b) the extent to which Indian States are likely to drive benefit from the proposed border trade?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) It has been proposed to open border trade through Nathu-la in June, 2006. However, in view of climatic conditions in the region, operationaiisation of broder trade through Nathula Pass may be delayed. The modalities for border trade through Nathula Pass are being worked out in consultation with the Chinese side.

(b) Border trade is overland trade and exchange of commodities by the residents along the border and trade and exchange of mutually agreed commodities in the border areas of the two countries. As such, only border residents will derive benefit from the proposed border trade

Imports/expert during current year

883. SHRI SANJAY RAUT: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to stale:

(a) whether it is a fact that the imports is expected to be more than the export during the current financial year,

(b) if so, what is its estimate with regard to the value of import and export; and

(c) what is the value of import of gold and the amount received through export of jewellery, etc, during the last two years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) and (b) According to the latest provisional figures available from the Directorage General of Commercial Intelligence & Statistics (DGCI&S), Kolkata India's imports were estimated